

## FRICTION IN THE COLONY

### CALEDONIANS AND THE METROPOLITANS

Writers on New Caledonian affairs have commented upon the fact that friction exists between the white colonists and Metropolitans, French governmental appointees from Paris. The colonists have a name for the latter -- Men z'oreilles. The origin of the word dates back to the time of the native revolt when French sailors and soldiers brought into the camps the heads of victims they had slaughtered for which they received a reward. As time went on they became tired of bringing heads and instead brought back a pair of ears as proof of their actions. The kanaka gave the soldiers and sailors the name of "Men z'oreilles", a compound of half English and half French, to designate the white soldiery. Eventually the white Caledonian borrowed the term and applied it to the newcomers from the metropolis.

One writer says that the metropolitan often shows arrogance and lack of tact and is apt on occasions to apply to the island-born whites a term greatly resented. One bone of contention is the greater advantages and privileges allowed metropolitans working alongside and doing the same work as colonial whites and the discrimination is sometimes the cause of bitter feeling.

Also the object of criticism is the ceaseless displacement of administrative staffs. French officials seldom remain very long in the colony and rarely gain sufficient knowledge of the island to acquire a liking or interest in the colony's affairs. Most islanders consider that the colony's finances are being utilised to little advantage by comparative strangers with no consideration for the better well-being of the island. It is a matter for congratulation that many local French deprecate the actions of the Administration in not paying greater attention to the country's development, a matter they consider could be remedied with stability in Government.



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